General Assembly
Official Records
Seventy-second Session
Supplement No. 1

A/72/1

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

United Nations • New York, 2017

Please recycle

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0082-8173

[28 July 2017]

Contents

Chapter		Page
I.	Introduction	5
II.	The work of the Organization	9
	A. Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development	9
	1. The challenge of climate change	10
	2. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals	10
	3. Data and statistics on the Sustainable Development Goals	12
	4. Means of implementation	12
	5. Strengthening implementation	13
	6. Regional dimensions	13
	7. Countries in special situations	13
	8. Haiti	14
	9. Effects of crime on development	14
	10. Natural disasters	14
	11. Forests	14
	12. Empowering vulnerable social groups	14
	B. Maintenance of international peace and security	15
	1. Adapting to new conflicts	15
	2. Women, peace and security	19
	3. Youth, peace and security	19
	4. Use of my good offices: preventive diplomacy and mediation	19
	5. Democratic transitions and elections	20
	6. Crisis management	20
	7. Sustaining peace	21
	8. Partnerships	22
	C. Development of Africa	23
	D. Promotion and protection of all human rights	25
	E. Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts	27

F. Promotion of justice and international law 29
1. Support for domestic authorities 30
2. International courts and mechanisms 31
3. Promotion of international law 31
G. Disarmament 31
H. Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism 32
1. Drug control 33
2. Crime prevention 33
3. Combating international terrorism 34
III. Strengthening the Organization 35
IV. Conclusion 37

Chapter I
Introduction

1. I am deeply honoured and humbled to be at the helm of the United Nations at this critical time. In this annual report on the work of the Organization, which reflects on the first few months of my term and the last few months of my predecessor's term, my aim is to offer a candid view of the world today and a realistic vision of how we can better deliver on the promise of the United Nations.

The world we live in presents a mixed picture of progress, challenges and opportunities

2. The United Nations was established to prevent war and human suffering by binding us together through a common rule-based international order. Today that order is laden with contradictory trends, and a clear assessment must be made if we are going to address these challenges effectively.

3. Hundreds of millions of people have been lifted out of poverty. More children, both boys and girls, are achieving greater levels of education and more women are entering the political world than ever before. This progress represents concentrated efforts by United Nations Member States to work towards these and other development goals. Yet after years of decline, the number of conflicts is on the rise and they are lasting longer, fuelled by the spread of terrorism and violent extremism, transnational criminal networks and deep regional divisions. The threat of famine in several countries, resulting from violence compounded by drought, lurks just around the corner. These contradictory trends are exacerbated by international power dynamics that are in flux. As we move towards a multipolar world order composed of multiple and shifting centres of power, there is an added feeling of unpredictability.

4. Now more than ever, multilateral action is needed to find effective solutions to this mix of challenges.

5. While progress on development indicators is moving ahead, the risks to global stability may be accelerating, affecting these hard-earned achievements. Climate change is creating deserts where once there was farmland; it is also generating extreme weather that threatens lives, livelihoods and infrastructure and leads to critical shortages of water. The planet's population will grow to nearly 10 billion people by 2050, two thirds living in cities that could be left unprepared for such rapid growth unless urban leaders grasp this opportunity to prosper by utilizing concentrated habitats to build more efficient infrastructures.

6. People are on the move, to cities and all parts of the world, in search of opportunity and safety. Population displacement and migration on a scale not seen since the Second World War bear witness to enduring challenges grounded in escalating conflicts and systemic inequalities. While some countries have been willing to open their arms to people in need, others have reacted by succumbing to deep national and international tensions and polarization.

Inequality and exclusion underlie many of today's challenges

7. Inequality and exclusion underlie a great many of today's challenges. Globalization has brought immense gains in the fight against poverty worldwide and has improved living conditions nearly everywhere. But it has been cruelly unfair: as wealth has increased, so too has its asymmetry, leaving millions behind in all parts of the world. Both developed and developing countries, North and South, face greater inequality and marginalization now than they did 20 years ago. Unless we work

together, the coming decades are likely to drive poverty more deeply into fragile low-income countries, pushing them even further onto the sidelines, while even larger numbers of people struggling with poverty live in middle-income countries. Furthermore, this sense of exclusion is not limited to the poorest countries but is vividly on the rise in developed countries as well, fuelling trends of nationalism and a lack of trust in national and multilateral institutions. Our hard-won collective progress towards combating poverty and promoting common security is newly at risk.

Countries and institutions are struggling to fully deliver

8. Threats to global stability are frequently rooted in weak infrastructure and failing institutions in fragile States. Where States cannot provide basic protections and services to their people, the likelihood of violence, pandemics or violent extremism increases dramatically. We must collectively invest more to help countries build inclusive institutions and resilient communities capable of thriving in a globalized world.

9. Overwhelmed, a significant number of States across the world are struggling to effectively address today's major challenges and deliver the services needed by their populations. Tensions are exacerbated by a lack of opportunities and by a strong sentiment among many peoples — their youth especially — that they are being excluded by the very institutions meant to serve them. Few countries or institutions appear to have a long-term vision to meet peoples' needs or strategies to manage today's interlinked crises, instead finding themselves entangled in reactive responses.

10. The United Nations and many other international institutions deserve credit for their achievements, but may also be perceived as bureaucratic and remote.

Demonstrating multilateralism matters more than ever

11. We need to rekindle faith in multilateralism and confidence in the United Nations as the place where States and civil society can come together to face the most pressing challenges in the world today.

12. The interconnected nature of today's global trends unequivocally demonstrates that countries cannot manage these risks alone. Acting together is the most effective way to fight climate change, global terrorism and the threat of new pandemics and is the only way to manage forced displacements and migratory flows in a humane manner.

Countries cannot manage these risks alone

13. Member States clearly recognized this commonality when they adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, two landmark achievements all the more remarkable for coming in a period of stark division in international responses to other challenges.

14. Along with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, these multilateral agreements constitute the most important frameworks for guiding us along the pathway to a world where more people can enjoy freedom from want and fear. We can succeed only if we work in greater unison. Multilateralism is not optional. It is the most effective vehicle, whether regional or global, for achieving the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all.

United Nations reform is essential

15. The United Nations has a proud record of achievement in keeping peace, improving human well-being and advancing human rights and the rule of law. But the Organization came into being at a particular moment in history. While its animating principles continue to stand the test of time, its day-to-day structures and practices are no longer well adapted to current challenges. The world needs a more effective, nimble and accountable United Nations to manage the crises of the twenty-first century.

16. My assessment of the world we live in demonstrates that we need to respond to interlinked global risks in a less fragmented and reactive manner. If the United Nations is to remain relevant and reliable, we must vigorously enact proactive reforms that are motivated by the objective of achieving better results for those most affected.

17. One of our main goals in steering the reform agenda must be to engage more effectively on prevention. For too long, our reactive responses towards threats to peace and security have been too slow, allowing crises to worsen so that effective action becomes more difficult. We know that preventing a crisis is much less costly and more effective than reacting to one. We know that catastrophic natural disasters can wipe out in seconds development gains that took years to achieve. We know from painful experience that wars destroy societies and that protracted crises keep generations locked in perpetual vulnerability. This must change.

18. I have called for a shift in approach, with a less reactive posture, towards a more robust approach to prevention. Prevention means doing everything we can, across a broad range of engagements and activities, to help countries avert the outbreak or worsening of crises that result in massive human suffering. Prevention is the common thread running through the interwoven fabric of my reform efforts. Both the 2030 Agenda and the sustaining peace resolutions (General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)) demonstrate strong support for a holistic approach to prevention; the best prevention is sustainable and inclusive development. While these two approaches are complementary, the 2030 Agenda remains the primary architecture within which the sustaining peace resolutions provide a solid framework for enabling the United Nations to concentrate on support for the planning and delivery of specific aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals as they pertain to peace.

19. I have set in motion several related reform processes. All aim to make the Organization's approaches more integrated and coherent, reflective of a more comprehensive understanding of the greatest risks facing the world, and more securely financed. The reforms will foster stronger and more accountable leadership, cutting away many of the burdensome administrative rules that hamper quick, nimble responses to crisis situations. They will increase and strengthen the partnerships we need to deliver meaningful change on the ground. Last but not least, I am fully committed to ensuring gender parity and greater geographic diversity across the Organization in order to better reflect and serve the peoples of the world.

20. The responsibility for preventing human suffering and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals rests with the Member States, but the United Nations has a vital supporting role to play. My reform agenda will make the United Nations a better partner for Member States in meeting their responsibilities.

Secretary-General's main initiatives in 2017

Cabinet-style weekly Executive Committee meetings to enhance decision-making and promote cross-pillar perspectives

New Under-Secretary-General-led Office of Counter-Terrorism endorsed by the General Assembly

In a call to strengthen prevention: Special Adviser on Policy; and High-level Advisory Board for Mediation

Strengthened whistle-blower protection policy

To combat sexual exploitation and abuse, a new strategy for the United Nations system to strengthen our investigative capacities and engage the responsibility of senior leaders

First report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations development system, outlining a wide range of actions

Commitment to achieving gender parity at the senior leadership level by 2021

Agreement with Chairperson of the African Union Commission to enhance coordination of United Nations-African Union activities at all levels

Joint European Union-United Nations initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls

Good offices: visits made to countries in different parts of the world and diplomatic efforts undertaken to seek solutions to crises

Initiated strategy on financing for development to facilitate investments in the Sustainable Development Goals, including a proposal to the Group of 20 on an international finance facility for education

Set in motion a process of reform of the development system, peace and security architecture and management of the Organization

21. In taking stock of these early months in office, I am above all inspired by the goodwill and creative ideas of people across the world. We must harness these forces as we serve the global common good. I look forward to working with Member States and stakeholders everywhere to build a stronger, more effective United Nations that can deliver today and for generations to come.

Chapter II
The work of the Organization

A. Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an unparalleled achievement

22. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents an unparalleled achievement in setting objectives for the international community. It marks a paradigm shift towards a comprehensive and integrated vision of inclusive sustainable development, applicable to all people in all countries and explicitly anchored in human rights. To ensure that actions follow this vision, more must be done to incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans and strategies, establishing performance baselines and effective statistical capacities.

23. I am committed to ensuring that the success of the Agenda is measured by the yardstick of improvement of the well-being and prospects of the poorest, most excluded and most vulnerable people in society. Countries and stakeholders confirm that the Agenda's core promise — to leave no one behind — must underpin the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations is undertaking cross-cutting efforts to support national actors in implementing this commitment through support for laws, policies and programmes and the ratification of international treaties. These include measures to eradicate poverty, combat discrimination and uphold equality for all.

24. Leaving no one behind was the theme of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development, which serves as the central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. In a clear signal of their commitment and of the universal character of the Agenda, countries from all regions and levels of development are outlining national priorities and approaches to include the Sustainable Development Goals in their development plans and strategies. Almost a third of the Organization's membership has volunteered to report on progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

25. The following challenges are faced by countries and vary enormously by region and other factors:

(a) Persistent poverty and inequality;

(b) Economic fragility;

(c) Unemployment, especially among youth;

(d) Unsustainable patterns of production and consumption;

(e) Unsustainable use of natural resources;

(f) Impacts of current conflicts and lingering effects in post-conflict situations;

(g) Vulnerability to disasters and the consequences of recent disasters;

(h) Climate change;

(i) Lack of resources;

(j) Institutional shortcomings: defects in rule of law, tax evasion and corruption;

(k) Limited space for civil society.

The Sustainable Development Goals are for the whole of society

26. To meet these challenges, the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals depends on national actions and on forging multilateral partnerships with Governments and non-governmental organizations, strengthening collaboration between national and local-level entities and promoting inclusivity in decision-making processes. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a new opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to serving people and building trust in political leadership. Key individual contributions are needed from experts, scientists in particular. Science is critical for understanding and identifying synergies and trade-offs among the Sustainable Development Goals, and an independent group of scientists has begun work to prepare the Global Sustainable Development Report for the 2019 high-level political forum. The United Nations is also soliciting expert opinions on advancing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and leveraging its holistic nature.

27. Cooperation on achieving the 2030 Agenda is working its way across the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council partnership forum is a critical space for sharing the perspectives and contributions of all partners, while the New Urban Agenda adopted at Habitat III in October 2016 addresses the manner in which cities are planned, financed, governed and managed. The 2017 Ocean Conference brought people together to formulate tangible solutions on such areas as marine pollution, climate change, ocean acidification and ocean governance. In addition, it will be critical for developed countries to deliver on both official development assistance (ODA) and climate finance commitments.

1. The challenge of climate change

Climate change is undeniable; the science is beyond doubt and human influence is clear

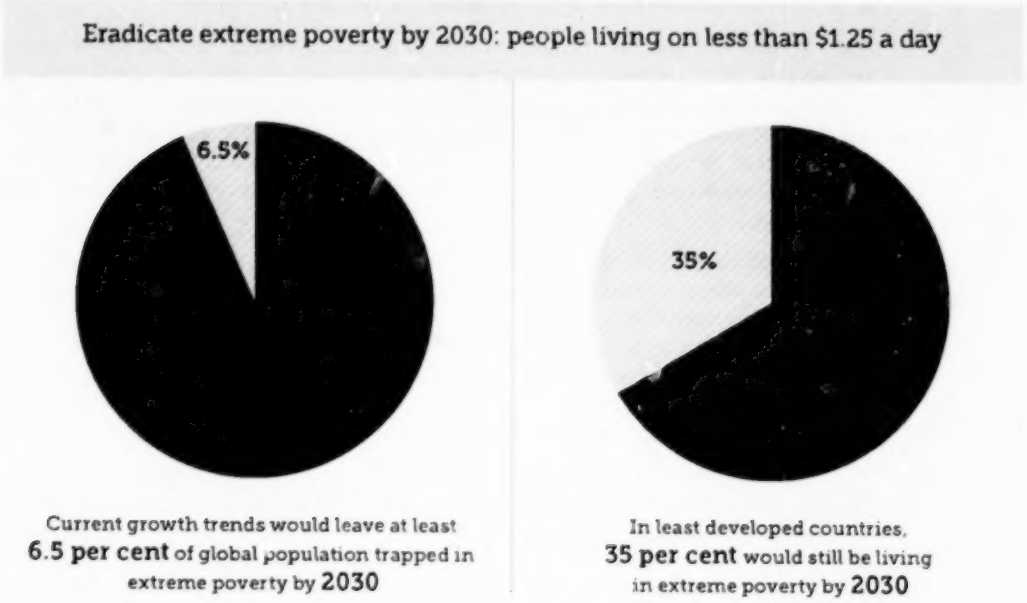
28. Climate change is an overriding megatrend, with a multiplier effect on desertification, displacement of people, weather-related disasters and water scarcity and pressures on other natural resources. As the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has demonstrated in a series of exhaustive and authoritative reports, climate science is beyond doubt and human influence is clear. I am intensifying high-level political engagement aimed at limiting temperature rise to well below 2 degrees and as close as possible to 1.5 degrees Celsius. I am rallying the United Nations development system behind Member States as they pursue climate action, mobilizing resources to support the implementation of national climate action plans and strengthening partnerships through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation. I also intend to convene a dedicated climate summit in 2019 to mobilize political support.

2. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

29. Despite the halving of the global poverty rate since 2000, intensified efforts are required to boost incomes, alleviate suffering and build the resilience of those still living in extreme poverty, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. While the proportion of humanity living in poverty is lower, some 700 million people still live in extreme conditions, and progress has not included a decline in inequality. Poverty as a percentage of population is deeply persistent in the least developed countries, although the largest number of people trapped in poverty live in middle-income countries.

30. In view of the variability of purchasing power parity, our efforts to eradicate poverty globally require a focus on all levels, from the least developed to the middle-income nations. Nevertheless, with the current economic growth trajectory, nearly 35 per cent of the population in the least developed countries may still be living in extreme poverty by 2030 (see figure I).

Figure I
Progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 1


Eradicate extreme poverty by 2030: people living on less than $1.25 a day
6.5%
35%
Current growth trends would leave at least
6.5 per cent of global population trapped in extreme poverty by 2030
In least developed countries,
35 per cent would still be living in extreme poverty by 2030

31. One of the keys to creating decent jobs and reducing poverty will be the promotion of structural transformation towards more productive and green activities. Structural transformations can generate resources for social protection that is designed to assist those who are unable to escape poverty with their own resources. Strong national ownership of the development agenda is critical.

32. Efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition have advanced significantly since 2000. The proportion of undernourished people worldwide declined from 15 per cent in the period 2000-2002 to 11 per cent in the period 2014-2016. Yet ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition for all will require continued and focused efforts, especially in Asia and Africa. Tragically, famine threatens four States today, caused by drought and conflict.

33. Donor aid has increased but more is needed. A significant achievement in 2016 was the rise in net ODA from member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee by 8.9 per cent in real terms to $142.6 billion, a new peak. An increase in aid spent on refugees in donor countries boosted the total. But even when refugee costs were removed from the calculation, aid rose 7.1 per cent.

3. Data and statistics on the Sustainable Development Goals

34. In 2017, the Statistical Commission adopted the global indicator framework to monitor progress towards the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. Tracking progress on the Sustainable Development Goals requires the collection of an unprecedented amount of data disaggregated at all levels, which poses a major challenge for national and international statistical systems. The global statistical community is working to modernize and strengthen statistical systems to address all aspects of the production and use of data on sustainable development.

35. To this end, the first United Nations World Data Forum, held in South Africa in January 2017, brought together key stakeholders to discuss innovations in capacity-building. Furthermore, the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-building developed the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, which provides a framework for addressing the capacity needs of national statistical systems and innovative solutions for achieving the full 2030 Agenda.

36. In February 2017, the General Assembly adopted the recommendations of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction (resolution 71/276) to measure progress against the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. As a result, the simultaneous and coherent measurement of disaster-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework is now possible, reducing the reporting burden on countries.

37. Gender statistics will play a critical role in monitoring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations is working collaboratively with other global, regional and national actors (including national statistical offices) to enhance the availability and use of gender statistics to support the accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and achieve transformative results for women and girls.

4. Means of implementation

38. The ambitious and complex 2030 Agenda can be achieved only if countries have the means to pursue the goals. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development identifies ways to unlock the necessary resources and investments. In its first substantive report, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development concluded that the current global growth trajectory would not deliver the eradication of extreme poverty by 2030. However, it found that national actions and international cooperation could help change the global trajectory and support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. A major undertaking of the Task Force in 2016-2017 was building a comprehensive catalogue of progress on more than 300 commitments and actions agreed by Member States.

39. The financing required to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals is estimated to be on the order of trillions of dollars annually. The redirection of capital flows can include efforts to attract, leverage and mobilize investments of all kinds — public, private, national and global. Nevertheless, there are theoretically enough savings in the global economy to drive this transformation, and the benefits will flow back to investors.

40. Strengthening the capacity of developing countries to formulate more effective and efficient tax systems is a critical element in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters has been working on a number of products, including training and in-country assistance, that will help countries to ensure appropriate taxation and in particular to counter tax evasion. In

another initiative, the United Nations, OECD, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have jointly launched a new Platform for Collaboration on Tax.

41. The goal of enhanced development cooperation is to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries, to implement programmes and policies to end all dimensions of poverty. The Development Cooperation Forum, an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform, is the primary locus for discussing efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation. It is used by Southern partners to share their experience, good practices, solutions and challenges among themselves and with a range of actors. In that context, the Government of Argentina, in collaboration with the United Nations, will host a high-level symposium on South-South and triangular development cooperation in Buenos Aires in September 2017.

5. Strengthening implementation

The challenge now lies in coordinated and coherent implementation by Member States, non-governmental organizations and partners across the United Nations system

42. The 2030 Agenda provides a vision for development; the challenge now lies in its implementation. It is critical to mobilize adequate financial and non-financial support, ensure the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships and maintain a relentless focus on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The General Assembly requested me to prepare concrete proposals, and my vision includes planning for collective results, linking functions with funding. Member States have reaffirmed the complementarity and mutually reinforcing nature of the Sustainable Development Goals with peace and security and human rights, as well as with work streams under the sustaining peace agenda.

6. Regional dimensions

43. Increasingly, regional and subregional groupings of countries are identifying solutions to their common development challenges, while regional institutions are being called upon to work collectively with Member States to develop regional strategies and approaches, not only on cross-border issues but also on more traditional issues of economic, social and environmentally sound development.

44. In 2017, each regional commission engaged with Member States to adopt, align and integrate the 2030 Agenda into their national development frameworks and convened a regional forum for sustainable development that will inform the high-level political forum.

7. Countries in special situations

45. Each country faces specific challenges, and the most vulnerable countries deserve special attention. The United Nations continues to support the implementation and follow-up to the Istanbul Programme of Action (least developed countries), the Vienna Programme of Action (landlocked developing countries) and the Samoa Pathway (small island developing States), as well as the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The United Nations has also played an important role in establishing the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries; the challenge now is to fully operationalize the Bank in seeking to fulfil Sustainable Development Goal target 17.8.

8. Haiti

46. In a step welcomed by Member States, the United Nations has initiated a new approach to the cholera crisis in Haiti (see A/71/620), consisting of two tracks. Track 1 consists of intensified efforts to upgrade the water and sanitation systems, while track 2 provides a package of material assistance and support for those Haitians most directly affected by cholera. My Special Envoy for Haiti is guiding the implementation, which is already under way; however, obtaining adequate funding to support the new approach remains a key challenge.

9. Effects of crime on development

47. Crime continues to erode growth and development outcomes as well as peace and security prospects for countries of all income levels. In the context of providing sustainable financing for development in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the United Nations has intensified its strategic approach, whereby crime prevention is considered a fundamental determinant of sustainable development. This includes building the capacity of Member States to combat illicit financial flows, prevent corruption and strengthen anti-money-laundering efforts.

10. Natural disasters

48. Over the past decade, economic losses resulting from natural disasters have reached nearly $1.4 trillion, hindering economic growth and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Investment in resilient communities and green infrastructure for schools, hospitals, roads, bridges, water and sanitation, energy, transport systems and housing is an imperative more critical than ever before, as is investment in effective, multi-hazard early warning mechanisms. This is an important aspect of my prevention-oriented reform agenda.

11. Forests

49. The global focus since 1992 has been to reduce deforestation and forest degradation. However, in a ground-breaking decision in January 2017, the United Nations Forum on Forests set a target to increase global forest area by 3 per cent by 2030. The United Nations strategic plan for forests 2017-2030 (General Assembly resolution 71/285) provides a global framework for actions at all levels to sustainably manage all types of forests and trees outside forests and to halt deforestation and degradation. It features a set of six global forest goals and 26 associated targets to be reached by 2030, all of which are voluntary. The global forest goals and targets support the objectives of the international arrangement on forests and aim to contribute to progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and other international forest-related commitments.

50. Crime affects all aspects of development and forest management is no exception. The work of the United Nations in addressing wildlife and forest crime focuses not only on strengthening the law enforcement, criminal justice and legislative capacity of Member States but also on improving the livelihoods of vulnerable rural groups, such as local communities relying on natural resources and ecosystem services.

12. Empowering vulnerable social groups

51. With its central commitment to ensure dignity for all, the 2030 Agenda recognizes the contemporary global risks of rising inequality, discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. It also recognizes that people who are vulnerable must be empowered, including all women, children, youth, persons with

disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants.

52. In response to dramatically rising numbers of people in search of safety or opportunity, the General Assembly convened a high-level plenary meeting on 19 September 2016 to address large movements of refugees and migrants, at which it adopted the New York Declaration on Refugees and Migrants (resolution 71/1). The Declaration sets out steps towards adopting two major compacts in 2018:

(a) A global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration;

(b) A global compact to more equitably share the responsibility for hosting and supporting refugees.

53. At the same meeting, my predecessor launched the "Together" campaign, a coalition of Member States, civil society organizations and the private sector that aims to strengthen social cohesion, counter xenophobia and promote positive narratives about refugees and migrants.

54. As global populations are growing older, the Organization is creating a forum for dialogue on the challenges and opportunities of ageing. Strong stakeholder input around disability-inclusive development also led to the effective integration of important commitments in the New Urban Agenda, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The number of young people is also growing, and the United Nations is broadening its strategy to more effectively account for the role of youth, including young women and men, in peacebuilding and humanitarian action, as well as to ensure identification of cross-pillar linkages.

55. My High-level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment identified purchasing goods and services from women-owned businesses as one of the primary drivers of progress. Corporations and Governments are also targeting companies owned by women in their procurement practices, while the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, covering 31 organizations and bodies, has prioritized purchasing from women-owned businesses.

B. Maintenance of international peace and security

1. Adapting to new conflicts

56. Today's conflicts pose complex challenges for the Organization. For us to be better prepared and effectively respond to these demands, we must reinvigorate our approach to include:

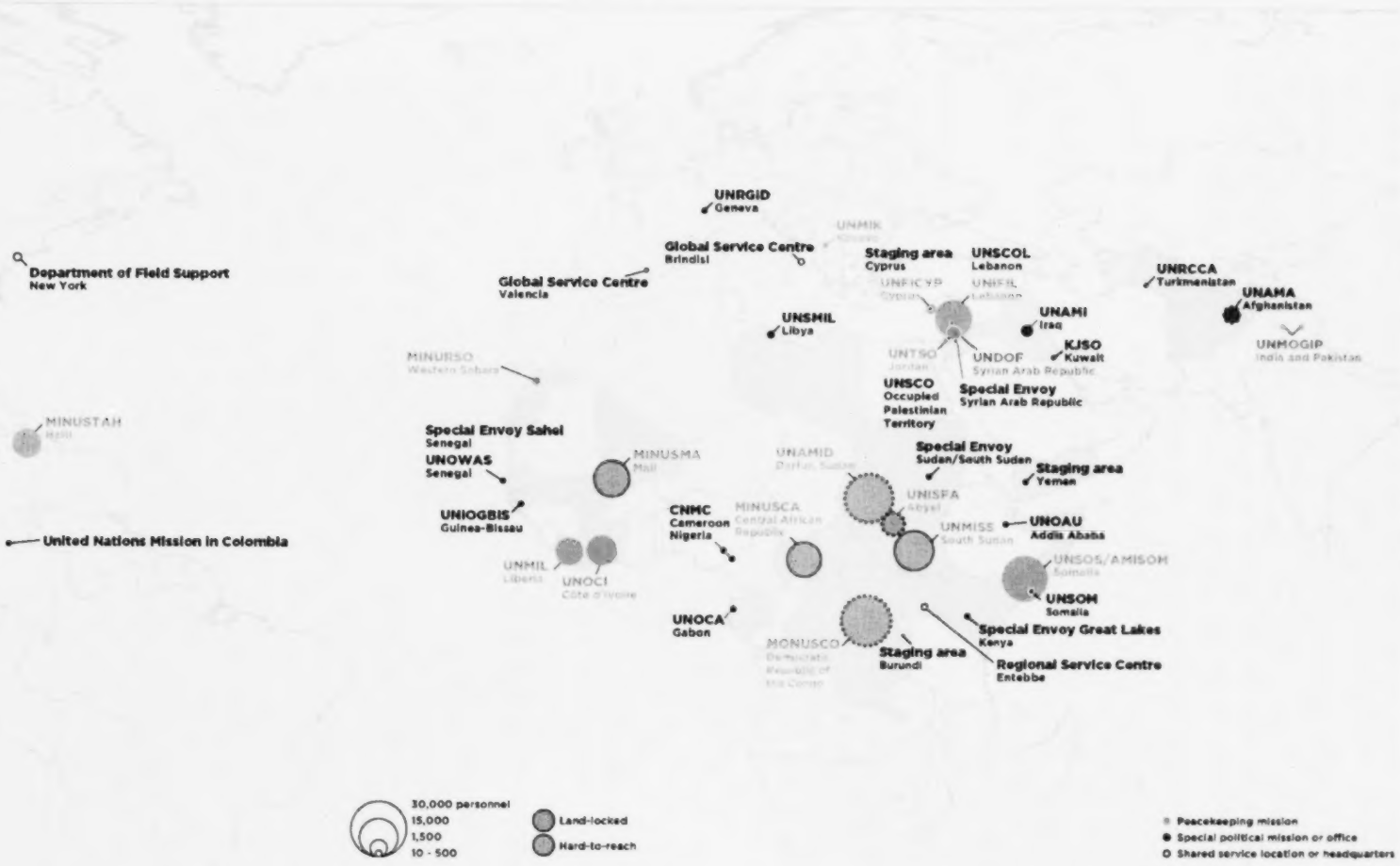
(a) Fortifying our capacity to build political solutions to existing threats and emerging challenges;

(b) Ensuring that State and institution-building strengthen legitimacy through inclusion and attention to grievances;

(c) Upholding the Organization's impartiality;

(d) Making effective use of the Secretary-General's good offices through mediation support.

Figure II
United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions as at 30 June 2017



(Abbreviations on following page)

Abbreviations used in figure II

CNMC	Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission
KJSO	Kuwait Joint Support Office
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNDOF	United Nations Disengagement Observer Force
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNRGID	United Nations Representative to the Geneva International Discussions
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNIOGBIS	United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan
UNMOGIP	United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan
UNOCA	United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
UNRCCA	United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia
UNSCO	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process
UNSCOL	Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSOS	United Nations Support Office in Somalia
AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization

57. United Nations peace operations are among our strongest tools for maintaining peace and containing conflict. There are currently 16 peacekeeping operations and 36 special political missions around the world (see figure II). The vast majority of our staff serve in volatile security environments. In peacekeeping contexts, the protection of civilians has become a central mandate, which can also place United Nations personnel in danger. In 2016, 117 military, police and civilian peacekeepers died in service, while 7 United Nations civilian personnel serving in peacekeeping and special political missions lost their lives in Afghanistan, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Somalia and the Sudan. By 30 June 2017, an additional 41 United Nations personnel had died in service.

United Nations peace operations: facts and figures as at 30 June 2017

A. Peacekeeping operations

There are currently 112,303 United Nations peacekeeping personnel in 16 operations, comprising:

- Uniformed personnel: 95,553
  - Troops: 80,067
  - Police: 11,982
  - Military observers: 1,543
  - Staff officers: 1,961
- Civilian personnel: 15,153 (as at 28 February 2017)
  - International: 5,004
  - Local: 10,149
- United Nations Volunteers: 1,597
- Countries contributing uniformed personnel: 127

Fatalities in peacekeeping operations and special political missions in the reporting year: 165

Fatalities in all peace operations and special political missions since 1948: 3,599

Financial resources approved for peace operations, 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017: $7.87 billion

B. Special political missions

There are currently more than 8,000 personnel in 36 special political missions, primarily civilian, some military guards, military observers and police, comprising:

- 13 field-based missions
- 10 special envoys and advisers
- 13 sanctions panels and monitoring groups

In the reporting period, the Electoral Assistance Division deployed over 60 electoral missions as well as missions conducted to provide capacity-building support to regional organizations.

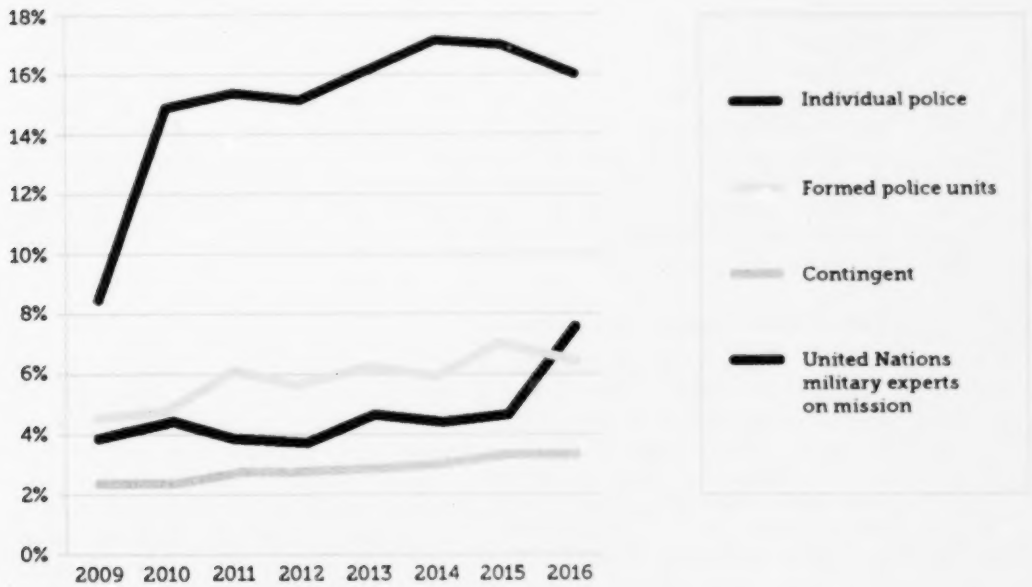
58. The United Nations must go beyond reacting to events and build anticipatory relationships with national and regional partners to prevent conflict. Prevention requires addressing the root causes of conflict across the three pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, human rights and inclusive development.

59. To bring us closer to a United Nations that is agile and able to deliver results in complex environments, I initiated a review of the peace and security architecture of the Secretariat. I strongly endorse the central message of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to place political solutions at the centre of our work. We are also breaking new ground with the creation of the Office of Counter-Terrorism (General Assembly resolution 71/291).

2. Women, peace and security

60. The women, peace and security agenda is critical for preventing conflict and shaping more effective responses to today's crises, and the United Nations must lead by example. I am dedicated to ensuring effective follow-up to the gender-specific recommendations emanating from previous reviews and the sustaining peace resolutions of 2016. I am currently urgently looking at how to increase the number of women appointed in United Nations-led or co-led mediation processes and in peacekeeping and special political missions (see figure III). The United Nations publication Guidance on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies was issued during the reporting period to offer practical strategies for more inclusive and gender-responsive mediation. At a conference on United Nations peacekeeping, held in London in September 2016, more than 60 Member States pledged to increase women's participation at all levels of peacekeeping operations. Women currently make up 26 per cent of head of mission and deputy head of mission positions, the highest proportion ever achieved, but we are still far short of gender parity.

Figure III
Percentage of uniformed women in peacekeeping, 2009-2016



3. Youth, peace and security

61. Recent Security Council resolutions have spearheaded a growing focus on harnessing young people's contribution to sustaining peace. The ongoing progress study on youth, peace and security is documenting the positive contribution of young women and men through in-depth consultations with youth. Further research needs to be done to better understand the implications of technology on growing youth unemployment and how technology can be harnessed in youth education.

4. Use of my good offices: preventive diplomacy and mediation

62. I am fully engaged in offering support in seeking peaceful solutions to disputes through the use of my good offices. Once the looming risk of violence emerges, my special envoys and representatives are often among the first responders. Working

regularly with regional actors, my Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel played a critical role during the post-election crisis in the Gambia in support of mediation that resulted in former President Jammeh's decision to cede power in a peaceful manner. My Special Representative heading the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia is committed to offering his good offices to facilitate negotiations on transnational water resources. My Special Representative for Central Africa continues to promote inclusive political dialogue and provide good offices in Gabon, the Congo, Chad and Cameroon. The peacekeeping operation for the Central African Republic is working with the African Union to implement the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation, including measures to prevent intercommunal violence. I have called upon India and Pakistan to find a peaceful solution to tensions and have reiterated the availability of my good offices to assist in any way necessary. I also rely upon a pool of readily deployable experts at Headquarters and the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers. Their technical knowledge has provided extensive support not only for my envoys but also for regional and national initiatives. I have also personally exercised my good offices in several contexts since my appointment and intend to continue to do so.

63. Engagement in preventing and ending grave violations against children can constitute an entry point for dialogue and mediation. State and non-State parties have pursued commitments to end grave violations against children. Together with the United Nations Children's Fund and others, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict supports the implementation of the May 2016 agreement between the Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army on the separation of children associated with the armed group, as an observer and guarantor. Working with my Special Representative, the Democratic Republic of the Congo committed to making progress in preventing the recruitment of children into the country's armed forces.

5. Democratic transitions and elections

64. The importance of accompanying electoral processes with preventive diplomacy was demonstrated over the year. In Ghana, the good offices of my Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel were critical in bringing about a peaceful denouement to electoral tensions. Coordination with regional and international actors, particularly the Economic Community of West African States, was central to avoiding violence. In Afghanistan, the United Nations supported key reforms to strengthen the electoral process, including the election of three women to the election commission. The conclusion of the electoral process in Haiti in early 2017, with the support of the United Nations, paved the way for the return to constitutional normalcy and political stability.

65. In contrast to these successes, political tensions rose in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as the expiry of President Kabila's second term approached in December 2016. The peacekeeping mission mandate was refocused to support the protection of civilians and the implementation of the agreement brokered by the Conference épiscopale nationale du Congo, made up of national Christian leaders. Significant support from the international community will continue to be required to allow the organization of credible and peaceful elections by the end of 2017.

6. Crisis management

66. United Nations peace operations are increasingly deployed earlier than previously to prevent, contain or help end violence. The imperative to prevent the further escalation of violence may dictate the need for the presence of United Nations missions even when a viable political solution is weak or absent.

Experience has demonstrated that no matter how well equipped or robust, peacekeeping cannot effectively fulfil protection of civilian mandates without a political strategy or plan supported by the parties and by regional and international stakeholders.

67. This was apparent across a number of peacekeeping theatres. The United Nations mission in the Central African Republic has intervened on many occasions to prevent communal violence from spiralling out of control, averting major massacres. The mission in South Sudan has struggled to protect civilians against a backdrop of intensified hostilities between the parties to the conflict and an array of crippling obstructions erected by national authorities. The deployment of a regional protection force has generated minimal progress in improving the situation because of a lack of government cooperation. Nevertheless, while falling short in certain serious instances, the United Nations mission is protecting and sustaining hundreds of thousands of people every day. Multiple discussions within and statements by the Security Council, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development have failed so far to produce a clear way forward for a cessation of hostilities and a revitalization of the political process.

68. Ensuring that peacekeepers have the right capabilities and the political will to protect civilians is critical. In Mali, delays in generating critical military assets have limited the United Nations mission's ability to fulfil the robust and proactive mandate authorized in June 2016. While the mission has pursued tireless efforts through mediation to support the implementation of the peace agreement, protracted disagreements and a lack of trust between signatory parties has stalled progress, further contributing to the deteriorating situation. A framework to strengthen commitment and better deliver on civilian protection mandates is under development.

69. Achieving negotiated settlements during full-blown hostilities, taking into account complex local, regional and international interests, has proven challenging in mission and non-mission settings alike. In the Syrian Arab Republic, the inability to reach agreement has allowed violence and human suffering to fester for far too long. Negotiations for a political transition in the Syrian Arab Republic resumed under United Nations auspices and were facilitated by my Special Envoy in January 2017. Yet on the ground, relentless assaults on civilians continue, causing massive displacements that threaten stability in the region and beyond. In Yemen, despite the efforts of my Special Envoy, the parties have not returned to the negotiating table. In Afghanistan, my Special Representative continues to support reconciliation initiatives within a prolonged humanitarian crisis. Progress towards a political solution in Burundi has been similarly slow, owing largely to the reluctance of parties to engage without preconditions.

7. Sustaining peace

70. General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on sustaining peace have expanded the notion of peacebuilding. Previously seen as a purely post-conflict endeavour, peacebuilding aims to prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of violence in order to sustain peace throughout a conflict cycle.

71. My forthcoming report on sustaining peace will set out the implications of this holistic approach, including links to broader reforms. My prevention platform will be a central element and will support a more integrated, strategic and coherent approach among the three pillars of United Nations work: peace and security, development and human rights.

72. We are operationalizing the concept of sustaining peace, where appropriate. The Secretariat is supporting the Peacebuilding Commission's working methods to bring together Member States, regional and subregional organizations, civil society

and international financial institutions to address a broad range of country-specific, cross-border and regional situations. Immediately after the peaceful resolution of the post-electoral crisis in the Gambia, a United Nations assessment mission, a visit by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission and the quick disbursement of grants from the Peacebuilding Fund were critical in ensuring support to the new Government's efforts to consolidate stability.

73. In Liberia, at the request of the Security Council, the United Nations developed a peacebuilding plan through a tripartite United Nations, European Union and World Bank mechanism to direct the transition out of peacekeeping. In the Central African Republic and Mali, the United Nations began developing community engagement strategies to build local capacity and prevent and mitigate intercommunal tension and conflict.

74. Steady progress in Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti and Liberia has paved the way for the planned drawdown of peacekeeping operations in those countries in 2017-2018. An attempted army mutiny in Côte d'Ivoire in May 2017 signalled that the Government must address grievances both within the Ivorian security sector and more broadly to sustain peace consolidation in the country. In Haiti, a smaller specialized peacekeeping operation will build on the work done by its predecessor in support of the rule of law. Nevertheless, the withdrawal of a mission does not mark the end of the road towards sustainable peace but rather the reconfiguration of the Organization's presence.

75. Fast, catalytic and risk-tolerant funding is crucial for sustaining peace. The Peacebuilding Fund maintained its support levels with the renewed commitment of 33 Member States at its pledging conference in September 2016. The Fund exceeded the United Nations-wide target to allocate at least 15 per cent to gender equality and women's empowerment. It also expanded its role in financing cross-border and regional peacebuilding initiatives, launched the first United Nations dedicated funding stream on youth, peace and security, and for the first time directly funded civil society organizations.

8. Partnerships

76. We stand a better chance of success if we join together to address potential crises and support communities in the pursuit of peace. I have, therefore, prioritized partnerships and signed an agreement in April 2017 with the Chairperson of the African Commission, formalizing joint mechanisms for regular consultation and cooperation at the strategic and working levels. The agreement covers the gamut of peace and security, from the establishment of a United Nations-African Union working group on conflict prevention to crisis management. In Somalia, Darfur, the Central African Republic and Mali, our cooperation with the African Union showcases a history of innovative and adapted solutions. I hope that my proposals on sustainable, predictable and flexible financing for African Union peace support operations mandated by the Council will receive favourable consideration by Member States. Such collaboration must be based on an understanding of comparative advantage and added value.

Our partnerships are among the most valuable preventive tools of the United Nations

77. Effective partnerships are among the most valuable preventive tools available to the United Nations, whether with Governments, non-governmental organizations or the private sector. In Central Asia, we are working closely with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization on a range of issues, including addressing the threats of terrorism, violent extremism and drug trafficking. In Southern Africa, the United

Nations supported national mediation training conducted by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Lesotho ahead of the June 2017 elections, as a contribution to the broader SADC mediation effort. In Southeast Asia, the United Nations concluded a new plan of action with the Association of South-East Asian Nations, emphasizing a closer partnership for sustaining peace and preventive diplomacy and in economic and sociocultural affairs. In Europe, I am committed to supporting a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine through the efforts of the Normandy Four, the Trilateral Contact Group and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

78. Our close cooperation with the European Union was further strengthened, particularly in Mali, the Central African Republic and Somalia, and we have worked together in key political processes across Africa and the Middle East. We have also focused on rapid deployment and security sector reform.

79. In April 2017, the World Bank President and I signed an updated Partnership Framework for Crisis and Post-Crisis Situations, expanding the partnership to include collaboration in preventing violent conflict. We renewed our commitment to work together on development, humanitarian, political, security, peacebuilding and human rights challenges.

To prevent conflict and sustain peace, we must assist countries in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals

80. To prevent conflict and sustain peace, we must assist countries in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. Yet the link between inclusive sustainable development and the prevention of violence is not well understood. A joint United Nations-World Bank flagship study on how development and political processes interact for the prevention of violence, the first of its kind, is under way and will examine the evidence on how grievances linked to inequality and exclusion increase the risk of violent conflict.

C. Development of Africa

81. One of my highest priorities is to strengthen United Nations efforts in Africa. To reinforce this commitment, my first trip as Secretary-General was to attend the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa in January, where I met with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat. In April, I convened in New York the first United Nations-African Union Annual Conference, where we pledged to strengthen and deepen cooperation and underscored the importance of the strategic partnership between the two organizations in efforts to promote sustainable development, peace and security and human rights on the continent.

82. Africa today, like other parts of the world, presents a dynamic yet contradictory picture of progress and challenges. On the one hand, economic growth in several African countries surpassed that in other parts of the globe, and the data encouragingly show that enrolment in primary education in sub-Saharan Africa improved dramatically from 52 per cent in 1990 to 80 per cent in 2015, while the reduction in child mortality rates has also been significant. Yet some parts of Africa face threats and challenges involving protracted violence and human insecurity that undermine development. Continued conflict has meant that three of the four countries currently facing severe threats of famine are located in Africa.

83. Economically, the continent remains highly commodity dependent, while, as a result of the volatility in global commodity prices, unstable export income in many African countries has significantly affected economic growth patterns. Future challenges also confront the continent. Projected population growth estimates show

Africa as the fastest-growing region of the world (see figure IV), with a growing youth population that will reach about 60 per cent of the total population by 2050 (see figure V). These young people require education, jobs, housing and health care, thereby putting pressure on Governments to deliver.

Figure IV
World population estimates and projections, by region, 2000-2050

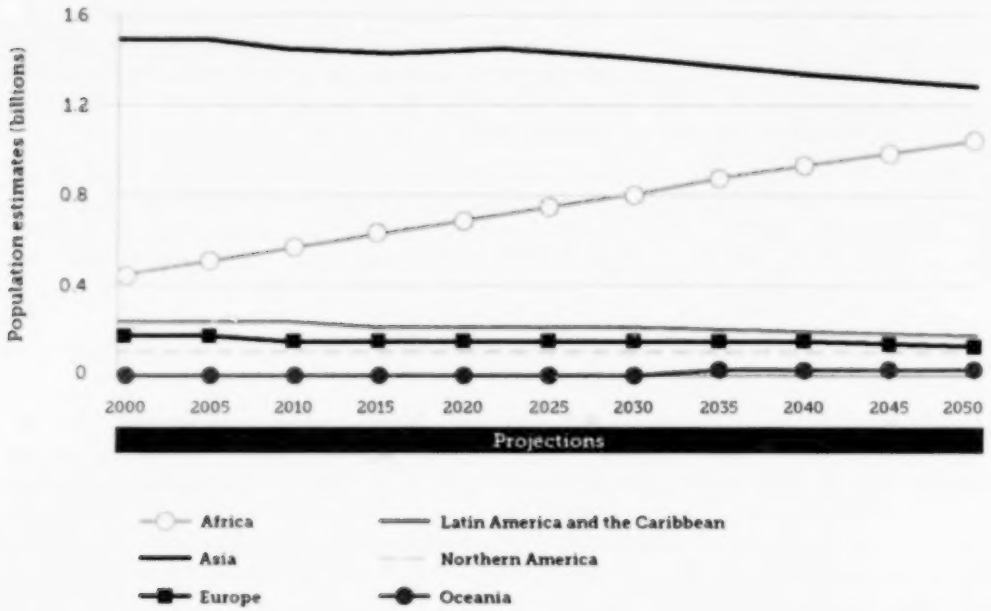
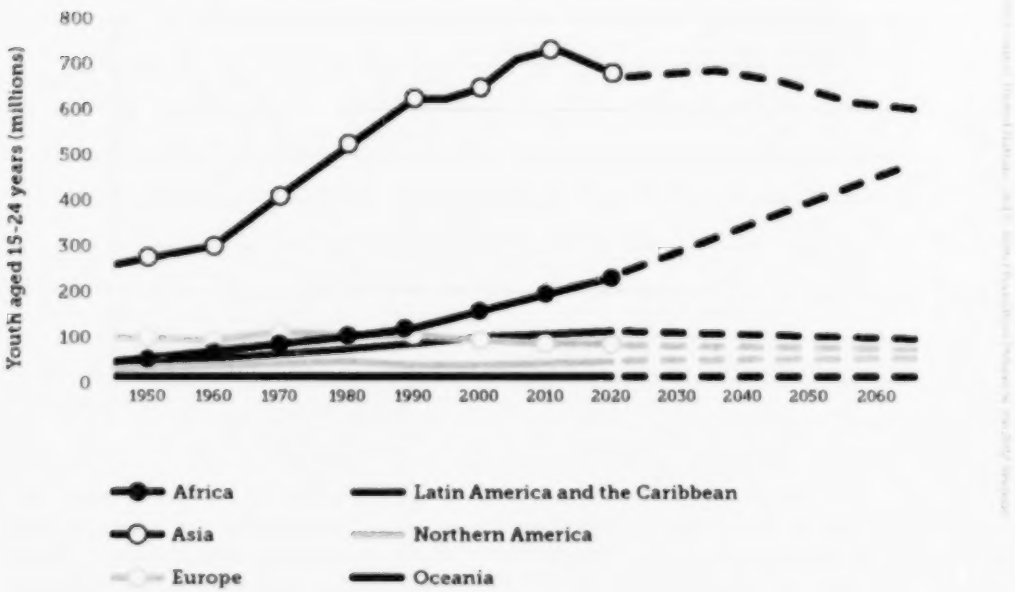


Figure V
Youth aged 15-24 years, by region, 1950-2060



84. The continent can take advantage of this demographic dividend by investing in quality education, teacher training, technology and innovation, which would boost productivity, create jobs and promote inclusive growth and prosperity. Scaling up investments and strengthening the ability of institutions to deliver innovative solutions will involve multilateral partnerships, which the United Nations can facilitate. Providing opportunities and empowering women and youth as a development goal will be essential.

85. The 2030 Agenda is key to Africa's future, and the United Nations is working closely with its partners in Africa towards a mutually reinforcing implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, in harmony with the African Union's Agenda 2063. To promote these synergies, the United Nations and the African Union have together adopted a common reporting architecture with a single monitoring and evaluation framework. Furthermore, in December 2016 the General Assembly adopted the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027 (resolution 71/254). These dynamics require a concentrated effort, and it is in the interest of every country in the world to focus on preparing a strong future for Africa.

D. Promotion and protection of all human rights

Peace is itself a human rights imperative

86. I am convinced, more than ever, that peace is itself a human rights imperative. Across our world, numerous crises and conflicts have erupted, involving repeated violations of the laws that protect people's human rights even in times of public emergency and war. Medical facilities, religious sites and schools were repeatedly attacked and bombed in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. In these and other crisis areas — such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Lake Chad region which has suffered the attacks of Boko Haram, Mali, parts of Myanmar, Somalia, the Sudan, Ukraine and the Occupied Palestinian Territory — hundreds of thousands of people have lost their lives.

87. Survivors have been increasingly compelled to flee, becoming exposed to heightened risk of death or further violation as they move in conditions that fail to respect human dignity, leaving children hungry, unschooled and subject to violence. Stopping these crimes against peace and ensuring redress for victims and accountability for perpetrators must be among our most urgent tasks.

88. Alongside bloody conflict, the past year has seen the continued deprivation of basic economic and social rights for millions of women, men and children owing to chronic poverty for some and weak governance or imposed austerity for many others. Massive inequality among genders, social groups and income levels has strained public confidence. All too often, economic and social insecurities are being blamed on "the other" — whether migrants or other racial, ethnic, gender or social groups — rather than on failures of public policy.

89. In this context, millions have sought refuge from armed conflict and have migrated in search of opportunities and the protection of their human rights. The death toll from attempted migration across the Mediterranean Sea has been despairingly high, with some 1,900 dead or missing by July 2017, despite fewer overall arrivals in Europe compared with 2015/16. Countless more lost their lives or went missing in other regions of the world, and suffered torture, trauma and other human rights abuses en route.

90. I have been distressed to see the malevolence of political discourse in many countries. Instead of taking a reasoned and cooperative approach, many leaders have fanned the growing flames of prejudice and fear which divide and weaken their societies. A wave of racism and xenophobia has swept the globe, manifest in stereotyping, racial profiling, hate speech and hate crimes. Perhaps more than ever before, the universal norms and mechanisms of human rights need our united support.

91. In a moment of hope for the future, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (see para. 52 above) took a strong, principled stand, with Member States committing to protect the human rights of all migrants regardless of their migratory status at all times and taking into account the specific needs of those in vulnerable situations. The Organization is supporting States in this endeavour, but greater and more consistent leadership is needed across every region.

Human rights are at the core of my call for prevention and sustaining peace

92. Human rights measures are the lifeblood of any effort to prevent conflict and sustain peace. They are investments which bring both immediate and long-term benefits in building resilience, redressing grievances, reducing inequality and advancing sustainable development.

93. This is why, in the past year, we have deployed rapid and multidisciplinary "light teams" to situations of concern in Burkina Faso, Lesotho and the Congo. The Human Rights Council established three commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions during the reporting period, on South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Burundi, respectively, as well as a group of independent experts on accountability for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also deployed nine other inquiries, including on Yemen and Myanmar.

94. These missions conduct on-the-ground investigations and deliver fact-based impartial assessments, giving voice to the victims and drawing attention to situations of urgent global concern. Their findings and targeted recommendations lay the foundation to hold States, non-State actors and individuals accountable. Field officers also monitor and investigate allegations to prompt States to fulfil their human rights obligations, thus preventing future violations. Working with media is also essential. Most recently, during the siege and bombardment of eastern Aleppo in the Syrian Arab Republic and during hostilities in Burundi, strong, well-informed public statements helped to generate media coverage, which helped to mitigate some serious abuses and violations.

95. A backlash against the advancement of women's rights has fuelled rollbacks of legislation relating to gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive rights. We must move with all deliberate speed towards greater equality, especially in terms of violence against women, conflict-related sexual abuse, trafficking and related exploitation and the pervasive discrimination that deprives millions of women of education, economic resources and reproductive rights. There must be stronger action against the recruitment and use of girls in armed conflict, including their sexual enslavement and use as suicide bombers. During the reporting period, we continued to assist countries to improve laws relating to the human rights of women and girls and agreed on frameworks for action to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence and ensure accountability.

96. I am concerned about crackdowns abridging fundamental public freedoms — freedom of expression, opinion and peaceful assembly. The full participation of civil society is essential to making progress across all United Nations goals. Clearly, when Governments and their proxies clamp down against activists, lawyers, human

rights defenders, journalists and political opponents — or scrap the guarantees of an independent judiciary — they are not acting to halt violence but are instead discrediting their own States and the trust of their own people. Denial of expression undercuts State opportunities for international cooperation and capacities to respond to real security threats and development challenges.

97. Alarmed by acts of intimidation and reprisals against people who engage with the United Nations on human rights issues, I have taken action to strengthen the United Nations response to such incidents. Civil society participation is essential to the work of the United Nations and that of all of our partners. My concerns have deepened over the past year regarding attacks against human rights defenders, including several individuals engaged in defending persecuted populations, indigenous peoples, minorities, women's rights, land rights and the environment. Across the globe, peaceful human rights defenders and those acting in solidarity with them have been met with growing persecution.

98. The Human Rights Council's universal periodic review process is now entering a new cycle, with every Member State scheduled for a third round of scrutiny. We will work to strengthen the relevance, precision and impact of the Council's recommendations, including by providing better support to Member States in implementation, stronger collaboration with United Nations country teams and the establishment of national mechanisms for human rights reporting and follow-up to link the universal periodic review to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. My Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict reports annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly on grave crimes against children, bringing to light the dire situations these children face.

99. Ultimately, the 2030 Agenda offers a road map towards a more rights-respecting world. A strong focus on human rights, equality and the empowerment of women has been integrated into the revised United Nations Development Framework guidelines, while the entire United Nations system is now committed to integrating the imperative of eliminating discrimination and reducing inequalities, leaving no one behind.

E. Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts

100. During 2017, the United Nations and its humanitarian partners assisted more people than any previous year since the founding of the Organization. A total of 96.2 million people, more than half of them women and children, were targeted for life-saving assistance of food, shelter, health and protection in over 40 countries.

Devastating natural disasters now displace three times more people than conflicts

101. Yet devastating natural disasters, such as floods, storms, wildfires and severe weather, now displace three times more people than are displaced by conflicts.

102. More than 31 million new cases of internal displacement were recorded in 2016, the equivalent of one person forced to flee every second. Of these, more than 24.2 million people were displaced by natural hazards in 118 countries and territories, or more than three times the 6.9 million people who were recently displaced as a result of conflict. The frequency, intensity and cost of natural disasters have increased owing to changing weather patterns. The 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon prompted 23 countries across four continents to seek assistance for more than 60 million people, and there may be a new El Niño episode in 2017.

103. An unprecedented food crisis has hit more people than ever before. Conflict, drought and violence have carried the threat of famine that has affected 20 million people in Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen.

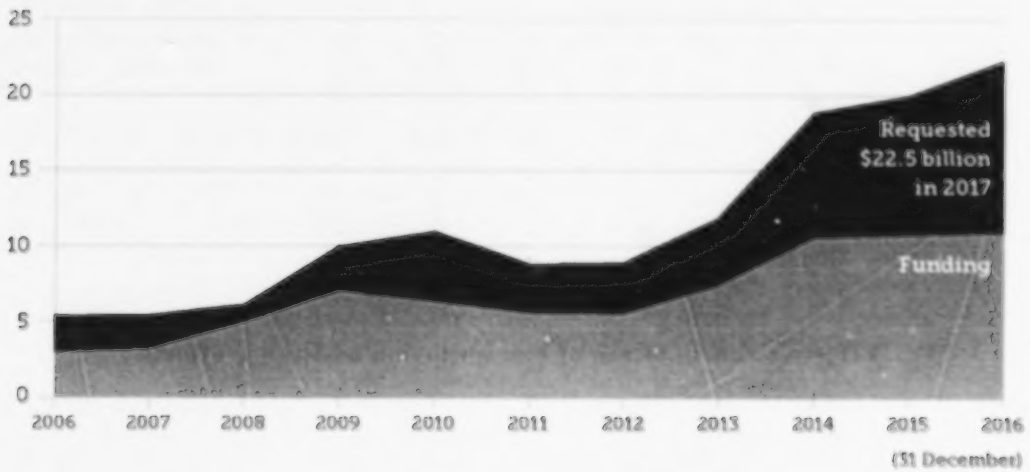
104. Nevertheless, disregard for international humanitarian law and human rights law remained endemic, as evidenced by attacks against civilians, humanitarian workers and medical personnel.

105. To address these needs, in 2017 the United Nations appealed for a record level of $22.5 billion in humanitarian support (see figure VI). Yet despite the generosity of donors, who provided $12.6 billion in 2016, humanitarian action remained challenged by a lack of funds and access on the ground. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs administered some $714 million in country-based pool funds to relieve 17 crises, along with $439 million from the Central Emergency Response Funds to support 47 countries through rapid-response and underfunded emergency grants in 2016.

Figure VI

Global humanitarian overview figures: amounts requested and funding, 2006-2016

(Billions of United States dollars)



106. In response to the unprecedented levels of humanitarian needs, the first ever World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 set out to reduce suffering. The Summit was evidence that the need for principled humanitarian action to better deliver to affected people is more crucial today than ever before (see figure VII).

Figure VII
Examples of people reached in 2016: a glance at humanitarian aid delivered around the globe

11,271
individuals rescued in Libyan waters
4 million
people in the Syrian Arab Republic received supplies such as blankets, cooking utensils, water containers, hygiene kits and plastic sheeting this year
27 million
square metres of land freed from the threat of mines and explosive remnants of war in South Sudan
9,500+
children displaced from Mosul, Iraq, immunized against polio and measles
200 cholera-prevention kits, with water purification tablets, soap and oral rehydration salts, delivered in Haiti each day
83% of households in the West Bank, Occupied Palestinian Territory, whose homes are subject to demolitions or damage, received immediate shelter assistance
30,000 litres
of water distributed each day to displaced people in north and south Gaalkacyo, Somalia
4 encashment centres in Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul and Kandahar, Afghanistan, providing grants to returnees from Pakistan

F. Promotion of justice and international law

107. The United Nations is increasingly involved in promoting justice and the rule of law in international courts, treaties and agreements and in providing support to domestic authorities. While human rights are discussed separately in section D above, respect for justice and the rule of law are an integral part of human rights. Deprived of peaceful, legal redress, the lack of justice and the rule of law, some segments of society may be drawn to violence. Thus, the role of the United Nations in promoting human rights becomes even more necessary.

1. Support for domestic authorities

A fully national Special Criminal Court has been established in the Central African Republic

108. In a major contribution to sustainable peace, a fully national Special Criminal Court has been established in the Central African Republic, with comprehensive support from the United Nations. The United Nations will continue to contribute to the Court, which is unique in its structure and national foundation. The Court is created as a national court which includes both international and national officials, formulated to address more than a decade of serious crimes in the country.

109. In its efforts to support the rule of law and respond to the horrific refugee crisis emanating from the explosively escalating conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations has been assisting in the protection of the human rights of those fleeing to neighbouring countries, mainly in Lebanon and Jordan. Also in support of national efforts in Colombia, I have designated a member of the selection mechanism of judges and other officials of the justice component of the final peace agreement. Furthermore, the United Nations is delivering critical support to 19 countries in 2017 through the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections in crisis situations (see figure VIII).

Figure VIII
"One United Nations" approach to police, justice and corrections and the broader rule of law

Global Focal Point partners provide support to operations in:
3
Transition settings
Haiti, Liberia, Darfur
10
Peace operations contexts
Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Kosovo
6
Emerging/sustaining peace contexts
Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen

110. Increasingly aware of sexual violence and abuse, the United Nations has helped national authorities build their capacity to respond effectively. This assistance includes capacity-building for criminal investigations, prosecutions, military justice, legislative reform, protection of victims and witnesses and reparations. In Guinea, following the provision by the United Nations of support to

a national panel of judges, 17 high-ranking military and political officials, including former President Camara, were indicted. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United Nations support contributed to the conviction of 100 members of the State security forces.

111. In 2017, the United Nations launched a flagship initiative on women's access to justice. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the United Nations produced materials for a training course for judicial officers on human rights and violence against women, while in Egypt some 1,000 women benefited from free legal services.

2. International courts and mechanisms

112. The International Court of Justice, one of the six main bodies of the United Nations, continues to function as a central mechanism for the peaceful resolution of disputes and maintains a high level of judicial activity (www.icj-cij.org). Acceptance of the Court's compulsory jurisdiction among Member States is one of my highest priorities.

113. The International Criminal Court contributes to the international justice system by holding people accountable for heinous crimes. In an important contribution to international criminal law, it found Ahmed Al Faqi Al Mahdi guilty of attacks on cultural property and historic monuments as a war crime. In 2017, the Court also convicted Jean-Pierre Bemba, former Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in its first case on offences against the administration of justice.

114. In the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, the Supreme Court Chamber upheld the conviction of two senior Khmer Rouge officials, Nuon Chea and Khieu Samphan, for crimes against humanity (www.eccc.gov.kh).

115. In an unprecedented step, the General Assembly established the International, Impartial, and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011. Equally unprecedented, the United Nations has provided technical assistance to the African Union Commission for the establishment of a hybrid court in South Sudan.

3. Promotion of international law

116. The International Law Commission completed its work on a proposed treaty for the protection of persons in the event of disasters and made significant progress on a possible new treaty on crimes against humanity. To protect the world's oceans, the Ocean Conference was held at United Nations Headquarters in June 2017. Member States also worked towards an international legally binding instrument within the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea to protect marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. Flagged as a major success, an amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer that will reduce emissions of powerful greenhouse gases was adopted by 197 countries in October 2016.

G. Disarmament

117. Disarmament and arms control have played an intrinsic role in easing international tensions and maintaining peace and security, and the Organization's advocacy for disarmament is more vital than ever.

Conventional arms are the predominant means of killing and destruction

118. While we rightly fear the use of weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms are the predominant means of killing and destruction. The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects remains the leading instrument for facilitating cooperation between States to prevent the diversion and proliferation of these weapons. As an example of collective action, in April 2017, after nearly two decades of inaction, the Disarmament Commission adopted recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

119. Through its regional centres for peace and disarmament, the United Nations continues to build the capacity of States to tackle illicit arms trade through practical measures, such as stockpile management and legal assistance. Since February 2017, the regional centre in Latin America and the Caribbean has provided technical and logistical planning assistance for the laying down of arms in Colombia, including methods and techniques for their deactivation.

The past months show increased use of weapons against civilian populations

120. An upsurge in the use of weapons against civilian populations includes horrific reports of chemical weapon attacks. Through the Joint Investigative Mechanism, the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were able to reach conclusions on four of the chemical attacks. I welcome the Security Council decision to renew the mandate of the Mechanism and fully support the continuation of its impartial, independent and professional work.

121. Negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons were held at Headquarters in July 2017, with my full support, as a step towards the universally desired goal of a nuclear weapon-free world. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted on 7 July 2017 (see A/CONF.229/2017/8), will be open for signature by States on 20 September and must be ratified by at least 50 countries before it can enter into force. The Treaty requires its parties to maintain their safeguard arrangements with the International Atomic Energy Agency or to accept Agency safeguards if they have not already done so.

122. The growing tensions over nuclear testing and ballistic missile activities undertaken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea undermine global and regional security and underscore the need for a robust international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. I welcome the united commitment to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as preparations begin for the 2020 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty.

123. The United Nations now faces the additional challenges of cybersecurity, artificial intelligence and the potential harmful use of outer space. In an age of technical revolution, it is vital that the international community stay ahead of the curve to ensure that technology is not used for malicious purposes.

H. Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism

124. The globalized movement of people and trade in goods, both legal and illegal, continues to expand faster than the international community can track, let alone regulate. The large movement of refugees and migrants, often triggered by conflict, has exposed more people to trafficking, with the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* showing an alarmingly high proportion of children among the victims.

Smuggled wildlife and antiquities are also caught up in this nightmare. Drawing on the first global database of seizures, the World Wildlife Crime Report: Trafficking in Protected Species, 2016 documented the trafficking of almost 7,000 wildlife species. In addition, technological advances are exploited for criminal purposes and cybercrime remains a global challenge. The United Nations is also addressing crime issues through the development of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and a global compact for refugees (see para. 52 above).

1. Drug control

125. The world drug problem remains a looming concern. According to the *World Drug Report 2017*, 29.5 million people suffer from drug use disorders, and markets are characterized by the fast-evolving nature of abused substances. Drug users are often trapped in a cycle of marginalization, making their recovery and social integration difficult.

126. The United Nations continues to support human rights-based drug policies and capacity-building in public health, criminal justice, prison administration and civil society in support of increased access to services, including HIV services, for people who use drugs and people in prisons. In the field of alternative development to replace drug crops, the United Nations supports rural communities by providing legitimate income-earning opportunities that focus on cash crops with sustainable markets.

127. At the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem, held in 2016, Member States reaffirmed a comprehensive approach that places public health, development and human rights concerns alongside law enforcement concerns. Nations reaffirmed the centrality of the three international drug conventions and other relevant instruments. The outcome document (resolution S-30/1) includes more than 100 operational recommendations which countries are translating into action under the lead of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

2. Crime prevention

Two of my highest priorities are the elimination of all forms of violence against women and against children

128. In line with United Nations support for Member States in responding to crime, two of my highest priorities are the elimination of all forms of violence against women and against children. Rape, as a war crime, is a frequent occurrence during times of violence. My Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict highlighted the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war and terrorism. This culminated in the adoption of Security Council resolution 2331 (2016) on human trafficking, in which the Council stresses the risk of trafficking in persons in conflict situations and recognizes the protection and empowerment of women and girls as a central consideration in counter-terrorism and obstructing violent extremist strategies. Children have also been targets of abuse, and killing and maiming remain the most frequent and horrific violations against children. For example, in Afghanistan, the United Nations verified 3,512 child casualties in 2016, a 24 per cent increase over 2015 and the highest level ever recorded. Thanks to advocacy by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, however, this year 110 children detained in Somalia were released by May. The United Nations must continue such efforts to eliminate this scourge.

129. Corruption has a deleterious effect on development because precious resources are siphoned off for personal gain. This year marked the beginning of the second implementation review cycle of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, which focuses on preventive measures and asset recovery.

3. Combating international terrorism

The General Assembly recently approved my proposal to create a new Office of Counter-Terrorism

130. We are spearheading a new agenda for counter-terrorism through three strategic measures:

(a) The General Assembly recently approved my proposal to create a new Office of Counter-Terrorism headed by an Under-Secretary-General in order to provide stronger leadership and coherence across the United Nations system while strengthening the delivery to Member States of United Nations capacity-building for counter-terrorism. The new Office will improve visibility, advocacy and resource mobilization to broaden efforts to promote conflict prevention, build sustainable peace and address the root causes that enable terrorist recruitment;

(b) A reinvigorated "all United Nations" approach will continue to assist in the implementation of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the international legal and normative framework, including a plan to stem the flow of terrorist fighters;

(c) The High-Level Preventing Violent Extremism Action Group will play a key role in the prevention of violent extremism.

Chapter III
Strengthening the Organization

131. Our efforts to implement the Organization's ambitious reform agenda rest on ensuring that we simplify procedures, decentralize decision-making and move towards even greater transparency and accountability. The Organization requires systems, policies and procedures that bring decision-making closer to the point of delivery and empower senior management to deliver on their programmes. To bring about this paradigm shift, I have launched a set of action-based processes to strengthen the management of the Organization

132. In April 2017, I established an internal review team on management reform under the overall guidance of the Chef de Cabinet. The team was requested:

(a) To identify internal measures that the Secretariat could take to streamline procedures, reduce delays and improve the implementation of mandates, some of which are already under way;

(b) To identify proposals that would support and advance the broader agenda to reform the Organization.

133. Consultations have been central to this reform track. During May and June, we held a series of informal brainstorming sessions with Member States and received feedback from departments, funds and programmes. In July, I held a retreat with Member States to present the initial ideas of the internal review team on management reform. The Secretariat will prepare my report on management reform for the consideration of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session.

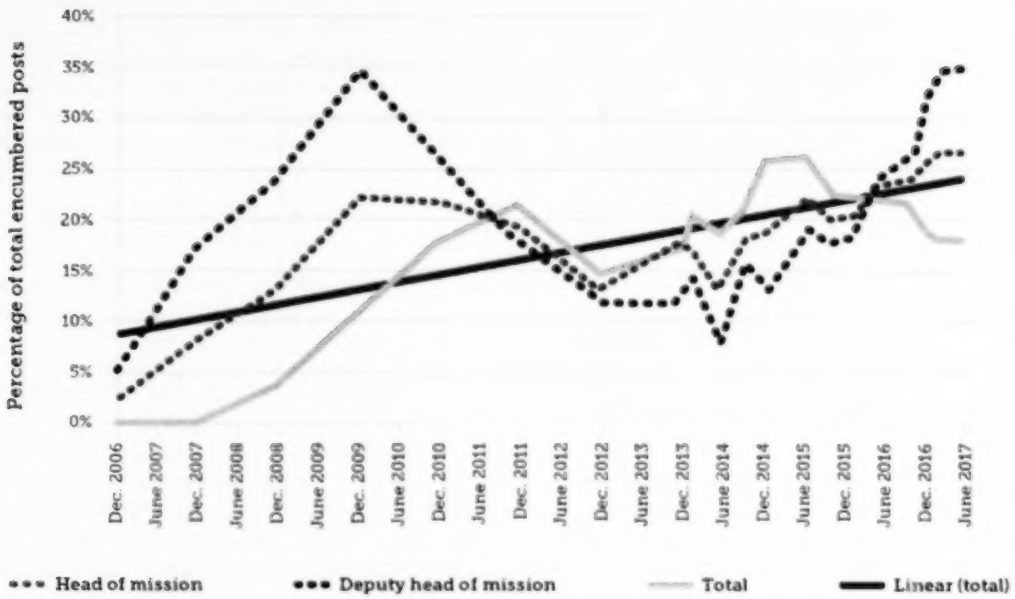
134. The Umoja planning and operational system has been implemented to modernize the way in which the Secretariat globally manages the administration of business and information technology processes. Umoja has been slow to take root and it has been a challenge to remove its kinks, but Secretariat entities are increasingly leveraging the system's capabilities to improve the efficiency of their operations. On environmental responsibility, the Secretariat is leading by example in helping the United Nations system "green" its operations by implementing environmental management systems.

The Organization requires systems, policies and procedures that bring decision-making closer to the point of delivery and empower senior management to deliver on their programmes

135. Smart technology alone is not enough, however. The Organization must develop and deploy its greatest asset — its human resources — in a more strategic manner. The aim of the staff selection and managed mobility system launched in January 2016 is to develop dynamic, adaptable and agile staff who can best deliver the mandates entrusted to them.

136. Because I believe that gender parity in the workplace is essential, I recently promulgated a comprehensive strategy to this end and plan to reach gender parity at the senior leadership level by 2021 and across the Organization soon thereafter. My special representatives are essential conflict managers in the field, and the United Nations has been steadily increasing the number of women special representatives and deputy special representatives (see figure IX).

Figure IX
Head of mission and deputy head of mission posts encumbered by women



137. The United Nations has wrestled with the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse. Every victim deserves justice and our full support. My report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/71/818) outlines four main areas of action: putting victims first; ending impunity; engaging civil society and external partners; and improving strategic communications for education and transparency. To this end, I have created the position of Victims Rights Advocate at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

138. The United Nations must uphold its ethical standards. Therefore, I have strengthened the whistle-blower protection policy that allows the Ethics Office and the Office of Internal Oversight Services to take preventive action where a risk of retaliation against those reporting violations has been identified. Staff now also have the right to seek a review of Ethics Office determinations. The revised policy is based on elements deemed to be international best practice. I have asked an internal working group to consider additional areas for improvement and I intend to consult staff and management in coming months. Additional strengthening of United Nations ethical standards includes the establishment of the Anti-Fraud and Anti-Corruption Framework, which fosters a culture of integrity and honesty and informs staff about the ways in which the Secretariat prevents, detects, responds to and reports on fraud and corruption.

139. Transforming the Organization to better deliver on its mandate is our ultimate goal. This means strengthening and integrating our management team, our methods of analysis and our early warning and delivery systems. It also means improving the quality of leadership at Headquarters and in the field and building the confidence of Member States.

Chapter IV
Conclusion

140. The present report provides a snapshot of the work of the Organization in a world steeped in contradictory and complex challenges. Millions have been lifted out of poverty yet millions of others face the threat of famine. Globalization has brought prosperity to many yet others have been cruelly left behind, excluded and caught in a system of inequality and rising xenophobia. The world has witnessed the massive migration of people fleeing violent conflict on a scale not seen since the Second World War and the undeniable megatrend of climate change and its multiplier effects demand global action, yet multilateralism is being questioned at a time when we most need coherent global responses to these interconnected events. No nation acting alone can resolve these crises. The United Nations is the gravitational centre for dialogue and cooperation to find common solutions, and with its concentrated support Member States have reached two landmark agreements: the 2030 Agenda and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. Taken together, they demonstrate that nations have the will to work multilaterally when they see a driving need. They represent a clear road map to a mutual destination: taking care of our shared global home.

141. The United Nations must be up to the challenge. I have laid out a number of reform proposals to make the Organization more effective, flexible and nimble, with a renewed culture of prevention permeating all our work. Ultimately, future generations will judge the United Nations by our ability to make our norms and aspirations a reality, particularly for those who suffer the most. The onus falls on the United Nations to prove its worth.

The onus falls on the United Nations to prove its worth

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